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THE OBSERVATOR.

Remarks on the Lords Addreſs to Her Majeſty relating to the Scots *Affairs.*

From **Saturday** December the 30th, to **Wednesday** January the 3d, 1705.

Obſ. HAſt Conſulted with thy Pillow, Honeſt *Country-man*, about going to the Wars?

Country-m. I have ſo far Conſulted as I am reſolv'd to ſtay at Home. A fine Lac'd Coat ſhall never tempt me to put it on. ——— But, Maſter, won't you give me your Thoughts on this Addreſs of our Noble Patriots the Peers?

Obſ. Prithee Read what thou art willing I ſhould ſpeak to.

Country-m. This Addreſs is Preſented to Her Majeſty, in Relation to the *Scots* Affairs, and their Lordſhips ſay, *We are with all Diligence preparing Bills, which, in due time, being offered to Your Majeſty, in a Parliamentary way, for Your Royal Approbation, we hope may prove of good Effect; ſo we think our ſelves at preſent bound to Repreſent to Your Majeſty, as our Humble Opinion, that it is highly requiſite for the Safety of this Your Kingdom, that Speedy and Effectual Orders ſhould be given for putting the Town of* Newcaſtle *into a condition of Defence, and for Securing the Port of* Tinmouth; *as alſo for Repairing and Strengthening the Fortifications of* Berwick, Carliſle, *and* Hull.

Obſ. We are much beholden to our Noble Patriots the Peers for their Vigilance in the Common Safety of the Realm. They have always been Wakeful for the Common Good, and had not God rais'd us up ſuch a Houſe of Lords, the Liberties of *Engliſhmen*, and the Prerogatives of the *Crown* would at this time have look'd with a very ill Aſpect. But, as God has opened their Eyes to behold the Miſchiefs intended us, ſo he has given them Underſtanding to find out all means neceſſary to our Help, to make Proviſion for effectually ſtopping all thoſe Crannies, thro' which either Home or Foreign Enemies may look with a Malicious Eye upon our Happineſs.

No ſooner had that Noble Patriot, the Lord *Haverſham*, mov'd to the Houſe the Danger to *England* from ſome Bills lately paſs'd in *Scotland*, but that Brave Auguſt and Venerable Aſſembly of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, took into their Conſideration the State of *England*, in relation to *Scotland*; and, as if Providence conſpir'd with thoſe Noble Patriots for the good of the Realm, Heaven directed Her Majeſty into the midſt of that Auguſt Body, that the Royal Ear might be ſatisfy'd with their Solemn Debates on that Subject, Hearing for it ſelf, and not Truſting to the Reports of others.

It is a Prerogative of the Crown of *England*, that the Perſon who wears it, may at any time appear in the Houſe of Lords, and there hear their Debates: Some of our Kings have done ſo, but not ſo often as could be wiſh'd; and that thro' the Advice of Evil Miniſters, who are ſtill willing to be the Reporters of Tranſactions in Favour of themſelves and their Party: And this Wiſe Act of Her Majeſty has given me the beſt Aſſurances of Her own Happineſs and Ours. And I wiſh, with all my Soul, that the Royal Ear were at Leiſure to hear all the Juſt Complaints of the Subject, which generally come under the Cognizance and Determination of the Criminals themſelves.

Their Lordſhips, with the greateſt Reaſon, have recommended the putting the Town of *Newcaſtle* into a Poſture of Defence. For in all the Wars with *Scotland*, if we may believe our Hiſtories, the *Scots* have work'd our Ruin more by their Attempts upon that Town, than upon all the other Towns and Garriſons on the Borders.

For by that means they put a ſtop to the *Coal-Trade*, and thereby Impoveriſh the Citizens of *London*, who pay ſo large a ſhare of the Taxes for the War; inſomuch, that when *Newcaſtle* has been Beſieg'd by the *Scots*, *Coals* have been at ſo great a Price in *London*, that none could buy but the Rich; nay, the whole Stock of *Coals* have been exhauſted, and the Citizens have been forc'd to burn *Cow* and *Horſe-Dung*; and the *Woods* and *Copſes* of the Neighbouring Counties, have been cut down before their time of Growth, to ſupply this vaſt City with *Fewel*.

Nunquam de Republica deſperandum eſt is always my Maxim, I never deſpair of the Safety of *England*, and have other Hopes of the Affairs of *Scotland*, than perhaps have other Men. But when we ſee Arrays and Armaments, Men Diſciplin'd and Trained after an unuſual manner, tho' in the Silence of Peace, it may put us in Expectation of the noiſe of War, and 'tis but common Prudence to make Proviſions of Defence againſt probable Dangers.

I am no Miniſterial Officer, and ſince I am Proſecuted for expoſing the Evil Practiſes of Corcupt Officers, which endanger the State; perhaps it may be eſteem'd a Crime to adviſe for the Common Safety. However, *inter nos*, you and I may talk of thoſe things we think moſt Expedient to be done. Hit or Miſs, we expect nothing for our Pains, and none ſurely can be Angry at Men that give their Labours to the Publick. Voluntiers ought to be Reſpected and Rely'd on, becauſe what they do cannot be miſtruſted of Private Intereſt.

The Notion of Defence by Garriſons, was eſteemed by our Anceſtors, and continued ſo long, and to ſuch ill purpoſe, that the vaſt Numbers of Garriſons and Caſtles of Defence were demoliſh'd, except thoſe of the Ports, which were preſerved as a Security againſt a Foreign Invaſion: For Experience Taught us, that Garriſons were rather an Encouragement to Rebellion, than a Defence to the Kingdom, and what a long time had been eſteem'd a *Defence* at laſt prov'd our *Inſecurity*.

The Walls and Bulwarks of a Kingdom are its Men, they are the Batteries to defend us, and

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to Annoy our Enemies, and therefore their Lordships in this Addreſs, have very wiſely recommended to Her Majeſty the Diſciplining of the Militia of the four Nothern Counties.

Now, to make good my Aſſertion, that Men are the beſt Walls and Bulwarks to a Kingdom, I ſhall Confine my ſelf to *Newcaſtle* as an Inſtance. And therefore do lay it down as a Poſition to be proved, That the Town of *Newcaſtle* may be better defended by its own Native Strength, than by Fortifications, Mann'd with regular Troops.

I would not be miſunderſtood, as if I meant that Fortifications are not neceſſary to the Defence of a Town; but I mean as to the preſent Conjuncture in the Apprehenſions of ſome People, they may ſometimes be neceſſary. But we find in the whole Courſe of our Wars, that the Garriſons have waiſted more of our Time, Men and Money, than the other neceſſary Expences of War: How many times have we taken, loſt and retaken, one Garriſon'd Town, when if that Town had never been, the Deciſive blow would ſoon have been ſtruck, and the Fate of the War determined; for in ſhort, Garriſons are but lurking Places for Cowards, that dare not ſtand the Chance of Shot in the Field.

To keep to the Point, *Newcaſtle* may better be Defended without a Garriſon than with it, and that to the Advantage of the Weal-Publick. At preſent 'tis impracticable to Defend it by a Gariſon, for if the *Scots* have any Deſign upon *England*, as I hope they have not, it cannot be Regularly Fortify'd in Time. The Advantage of Defending it by its own Native Strength is apparent. What the Numbers of the Trading Inhabitants are is uncertain, but the Number of the Keel-Bullies, and others, employ'd in the Colliery, is incredible. Now, if the Native Strength of the Place be Armed, which may ſoon be done, from Her Majeſties Arſenal in the Tower of *London*, would, as I Humbly conceive, form an Army equal to any the *Scots* can bring againſt it. And I hope it may be allow'd me, that theſe Men are fitter than any for the Defence of a Place, about which they know every Foot of Ground, Night or Day, and that theſe Men will be more Reſolute in its Defence than others, ſince they Fight in the immediate Preſervation of themſelves, their Families, their Habitations and Effects.

I ſhould in this Place ſay ſomething of the Neceſſity of our Naval Strength to be employ'd to the Northward; I ſee a vaſt Hole thro' which the *Scots* or *French* may creep to do us an irreparable Damage, and I know how that Hole may be ſtop'd; but 'tis dangerous meddling with our Sea Affairs. You ſee an Information in the *Crown Office* is the conſequence of it; and ſome think it better that our Nation be Ruin'd, than to have the Wiſdom of ſome Men call'd into Queſtion.

But certainly the Deſciplining of our Men is the immediate means to prevent the Effects of the Acts lately paſs'd in *Scotland*: But this will be to no purpoſe, if care be not taken of the Lieutenancy, which ought always to be in good Hands, but more eſpecially at this Juncture. To conſider how our Militia has been Officer'd in ſome times, is matter of Amazement. When Old Men and Boys have been made Officers, and Commiſſions have been render'd uſeleſs by being given to ſuch as have had neither Skill nor Courage to Execute them, as if the Exerciſe of Arms had deſcended to us as a meer Ceremony, and that there was no other meaning in *Commiſſions* of *Lieutenancy* and *Militia*, than marks of Royal Favour.

Certainly *England* can never be in worſe Circumſtances than when Commiſſions of the *Peace* and *Lieutenancy* are in Corrupt Hands, for they are the two great Bulwarks on which the Safety of *England* depends, and when ever we ſhall be ſo unhappy as to entruſt the Enemies of *England* with theſe two Grand Securities, we ſhall be unſafe, if not loſt. But I hope we are ſafe in this Point: For can there be a Man in *England* ſo very Perfidious as to recommend Perſons into the Commiſſions of the *Peace* or *Lieutenancy*, that are Enemies to their Queen and Country?

Country-m. Maſter, I fancy if ever we ſhould have occaſion we ſhould ſee a great many People have no more Conrage than *Roger* the Farmer, I believe I may March as far as my Captain, for he took up a Commiſſion only to Bounce with it, and loves Fighting no more than my ſelf.

Obſ. Truly, I think ſuch as take up Commiſſions only as Feathers in their Caps, or to get the Defaulters Money, ought to be ſent to Sea and forc'd to Fight, if they throw up their Commiſſions on Shore; for 'tis but Reaſonable that ſuch as took up Commiſſions for their own Honour or Profit, ſhould be forc'd to uſe them for the Good of their Country, which was the Deſign and Practice of our Fore-fathers.

Country-m. I hope we ſhall never have occaſion, but if we ſhou'd, I can't help laughing to think how our Malicious Men of War wou'd look, no more like thoſe Fellows the Duke of *Marlborough* had at *Hockſtedt*, than my Head is like a Turnip. Your City *Train-Bands* you ſay are the beſt, and yet what forty Colonels have Commanded them in my Time?

One of 'em I remember was an *Alderman*, a *Colonel*, and a *Lord-Mayor*, and during the Time of his *Mayoralty* went a Hunting, and whilſt his Lordſhip was untruſſing a Point under a Hedge, his Company ſtarted a *Hare*, one of 'em comes to his Lordſhip, and ask'd him *Whether he ſaw the Hare*; his Lordſhip anſwer'd, *Yes I did; ſhe ran juſt by me, and I thank my God I was not afraid of her.*

Obſ. Don't Banter; if you do I'll get you Preſs'd.

Country m. I can't help it. I have been ready to ſplit my Sides to hear our Captain Exerciſe. *Face about to my Neighbour* Johnſon's *Pales as you were laſt Time we Muſter'd, gather your ſelves into a Cluſter*, &c. Oh Brave Captains!

Obſ. But theſe Men may learn *Martial Diſcipline.*

Country-m. Aye, aye, but in what Time? We may loſe more than we are willing firſt. As to their Courage I can ſay little till they are try'd. I have told you of a Colonel I knew that was not afraid of a Hare, but I can tell you of a Captain that was afraid of a Man, he's a Captain of the Hamblers, and taking a turn to *Enfield* met with ſome of the *Hockſtedt* Men, he ſoon let 'em know what a Worſhipful Perſon he was, whereupon he began to talk of *Martial Diſcipline*, which he underſtood as well as a Cow does *Spaniſh*, his Qualifications were *Saucineſs* and *Impudence*, which not agreeing with the Tempers of the other Gentlemen, one of them Challeng'd him to Fight at Sword, a thing he did not underſtand, and therefore refuſed it; the Gentleman reſolved to have ſome Satisfaction or other, and thereupon condeſcended to turn Porter, and Challeng'd him to Box and Fiſty Cuffs, but in good Truth our Captain was a Coward, and would not Fight after any manner, and ſo all the Gentlemen laid Hands upon the Captain, and toſt him in a Blanket as if he had been a *Ram-Cat.*

Now, Sir, this Man looks as much like a Soldier as your ſelf, he looks as Sower as a *Lemmon*, juſt as if he had been Baptiz'd in *Vinegar*, to ſharpen his Countenance for the Wars, and yet not half ſo Stout as your *Country-man*, who has ventur'd many a Bloody Noſe in his Life Time; and if it were not ſo late I could tell you ſo many Stories of your *Militia Officers*, that you ſhould have little Reaſon to call *Roger* a Coward.

Advertiſements.

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